3:Chinnery G, E-5 (1929)1931 OM10 New Ireland OM10

165 adequately with the problems arising from these conditions. The high infant mortality rate in places as favorably situated as Munuwai, Losuk, Nono, Laraibina, Lugagun, &c., however, is difficult to explain. Between Munuwai and Kavieng, the conditions of life for child-bearing women and for infants are not so difficult as those in villages [853] lower down the road. In all the villages above-named, infants are commonly fed on taro and other solid foods. Mission influence however is very strongly established in this part of the district, and, as the villages are within reach of the medical authorities at Kavieng, conditions should improve as time goes on.

OLD PEOPLE.

162 It is amazing to find on this road such a large number of extremely 145 old people. Nowhere else in the Territory have I noticed so many. The males numbered 604 and the females 815. Practically all of [302] them were grey-haired or bald, and in the lower end of the road many of the bald men wore neat wigs of human hair. Some of them are survivors of the old black-birding days, having worked on the cane-fields in Queensland. It is doubtful if many of these old people will survive another two years, a possibility that might be remembered when the death rates for the next few years are being tabulated.

WOMEN OF REPRODUCTIVE AGE.

162 Out of the women enumerated, I counted 1,779 who were definitely said by the elders to be the fertile women on whom the future population depended, until females at present under age of puberty could become married. The number of reproductive women is probably larger, but I could only estimate this figure, and in this was assisted by the old men.

ABORTION.

847 The tables disclose a large number of fruitless unions, 34 per cent. 842 of which are due apparently to sterility. Some of my informants told me that the women chew the leaves of plants and drink infusions from leaves, roots, &c., both to prevent conception and to procure abortion. It is not easy for a male observer to disentangle the mass of information offered on this subject, but, as Dr. (Miss) Powdermaker is now making an intensive study in the area with especial reference to women, valuable data may shortly be forthcoming. It is said there are also mechanical methods of procuring abortion. A peculiar aspect of the information regarding sterility is that women chew certain leaves when newly married, and become sterile, but, when later on they desire to have children, another species of plant is eaten to restore fertility. This could not be closely investigated, but my information has been passed on to Dr. Powdermaker, who may be successful in securing reliable information on the point.